

Does Grace Need Our Help?

Introduction and Review

- ❑ Grace (χάρις) was the typical Greek greeting & Peace (εἰρήνη) was the typical Hebrew greeting.
- ❑ Grace in this context means unmerited & undeserved favor from God that results in salvation.
- ❑ Peace in this context means freedom from anxiety & inner turmoil (Rom. 5:1-5; Phil. 4:6-7). **Peace w/God & people!**
- ❑ Grace & peace is to be experienced collectively as a church, not simply individually by each believer.
- ❑ Grace & peace is to be experienced in spite of weaknesses & failures in believers individually or in the church collectively.

I. Grace & Works Before Salvation

Struggle: guilt/shame. Does God love me? What can I do... to love more?

A. God

In a doctrinal sense, God is a perfect and personal spirit, who is infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His being and attributes (1Tim. 6:15-16). God is love; perfectly holy, hates sin, loves justice & is incapable of partiality.

B. The Sinner

The bible describes the sinner as an enemy of God who loves sin; one who is lost, blind, deceived, a slave of sin, a child of wrath, & even dead in sin (Eph. 2:1-3). ALL sinners are isolated from God & without hope in redeeming themselves (Eph. 2:11-12; Rom. 3:23).

C. Salvation

*What can the sinner do to make things right with God? How does the sinner help God in salvation? What about people that grew up in the church, haven't done awful things & continue to serve faithfully? ALL sinners need the same grace for salvation & NOTHING they have done counts toward salvation (Lk. 18:9-14; Eph. 2:4-9; **Rom. 11:6**).*

APPL: Grace then means that salvation was unearned & undeserved. Absolutely nothing that we did prior to salvation was a positive contribution or consideration in our salvation – abstinence, bible study, prayer, church attendance, giving, singing, etc.

II. Grace & Works After Salvation

A. God

After salvation, God is the Father in heaven; Jesus is the good Shepherd, the King, the Head, the High Priest; the Holy Spirit is the Helper or Counselor, Convincer, Teacher & Sanctifier (Mt. 5:16; Jn. 10:11; 14:26; Heb. 7:26).

B. The Believer

The believer is now considered: a child, sheep, citizen, branch, disciple, part of the body, priest & saint (1Jn. 3:1; Jn. 10:27).

C. Relationship

*What can the believer do to make the relationship better? What can the believer do for God to love him/her more? Can the believer do anything to make God love him/her less? It is a part of human nature to think that something we did counts for us in salvation & something that we do counts for us in our relationship with God. ALL believers need the same grace for the relationship to be maintained & **NOTHING** that a believer does can improve or destroy that relationship (Rom. 8:28-39; 1Jn. 3:1-2).*

APPL: Grace means that our relationship with God is unearned & undeserved. God alone establishes the relationship & God alone maintains the relationship (Jn. 10:27-29). I am not talking about fellowship with God or growth in Christ – affected by our sins. I am talking about this **eternal relationship**. Absolutely nothing that we do after salvation is a positive or negative contribution to this relationship.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, grace means that what we have been given from God was unearned & undeserved. Grace means that God does not take into consideration the best or the worst of our efforts. Absolutely nothing that we did prior to salvation was a factor in our redemption & nothing that we have done or will do is a factor in our relationship with God. It is all of grace and therefore God absolutely, positively does not need our help; **Grace does not need our help!** ALL of the glory in our redemption & relationship belongs to God! This should humble every one of us; set you free from pride, legalism, self-righteousness, being judgmental & bring us peace; increase our love for Christ, thanksgiving, praise, adoration, prayer...

And if you are not a Christian, this truth should set you free too; free from thinking that you can be saved or have a relationship with God any other way than by grace. You must be saved by grace; you must believe in Jesus...

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